

REMARKS

Claims 1, 9 through 12, 20, and 21 have been amended. Claims 1 through 21 remain in the application.

DOUBLE PATENTING

Claim 1 was provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 09/965,904. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As to co-pending Application No. 09/965,904, claim 1 claims a method of logical modeling operator interaction with a programmable logic controller logical verification system. The method includes the steps of constructing a flowchart of interaction of an operator in a workcell using a computer and testing whether logic of the flowchart is correct. The method also includes the steps of using the flowchart to test PLC code and building the workcell if the logic of the flowchart is correct.

Independent claim 1 of the present application claims the present invention as a method of part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system. The method includes the steps of constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer and determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct. The method also includes the steps of using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model.

The double-patenting doctrine precludes one person from obtaining more than one valid patent for the same invention or an obvious modification of an invention. Double patenting is concerned with attempts to claim the same or related subject matter twice. Thus, the standard for comparison for the second patent is what was *claimed* in the first patent, not what was

disclosed in the specification of the first patent. “In general, a rejection on grounds of double patenting relies upon an analysis similar to the obviousness analysis relevant to a rejection pursuant to § 102(e) and 103; the key difference is that a double-patenting rejection looks solely to the claims of the prior art reference, and not to the entire disclosure of the prior art reference, as the basis for comparison. . . . A rejection for obviousness must be based on a comparison of the invention to the entirety of the disclosure in the prior art reference, whereas an obviousness-type double-patenting rejection must be grounded on a comparison of the invention to the claims, and only the claims, of the prior art reference.” Purdue Pharma L.P. v. Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH, 98 F.Supp.2d 362, 392, 55 U.S.P.Q.2d 1168, 1190 (S.D. N.Y. 2000), *aff’d*, 237 F.3d 1359, 57 U.S.P.Q.2d 1647 (Fed. Cir. 2001).

Co-pending Application No. 09/965,904 does not render obvious the claimed invention of claim 1 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting. Claim 1 of co-pending Application No. 09/965,904 is claiming a method of logical modeling operator interaction with a programmable logic controller logical verification system including constructing a flowchart of interaction of an operator in a workcell using a computer, testing whether logic of the flowchart is correct, using the flowchart to test PLC code, and building the workcell if the logic of the flowchart is correct. Claim 1 of the present application does not claim this feature. Further, claim 1 of the present application claims a method of part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system including constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer, determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct, using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code, and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model. Claim 1 of co-pending Application No. 09/965,904 does not claim this feature. Therefore, it is

respectfully submitted that claim 1 of the present application is allowable over the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 1 through 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is allegedly directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

As to inventions patentable, 35 U.S.C. § 101 provides that:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

The plain and unambiguous meaning of Section 101 is that any invention falling within one of the four stated categories of statutory subject matter may be patented, provided it meets the other requirements for patentability set forth in Title 35. A patent cannot be held invalid under 35 U.S.C. § 101 pursuant to so-called “business method” exception to statutory subject matter, since business methods are subject to the same legal requirements for patentability as any other process or method. State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group Inc., 47 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1998).

Claims 1 through 21 claim a method for application of a part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system using a computer. As such, the method is useful and is one of the statutory categories of patentable subject matter. The method of the present invention therefore has utility. Contrary to the Examiner’s opinion, the method is not carried out on paper. The terms used in the claims are interpreted in light of the specification. In addition, claims 1 through 21 have been amended to include using a computer. As such, claims 1

through 21 require a computer and are not abstract ideas or mental steps. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 through 21 are allowable over the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 101.

35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1 through 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement.

The first paragraph of Section 112 provides that “the specification shall contain a written description of the invention . . .”. “The description requirement’s purposes are to assure that the applicant was in full possession of the claimed subject matter on the application filing date and to allow other inventors to develop and obtain patent protection for later improvements and subservient inventions that build on applicant’s teachings.” See In re Barker, 559 F.2d 588, 194 U.S.P.Q. 470 (C.C.P.A 1977), cert. denied, 434 U.S. 1064 (1978); Vas-Cath Inc. v. Mahurkar, 935 F.2d 1555, 19 U.S.P.Q.2d 1111 (Fed. Cir. 1991); and In re Dossel, 115 F.2d 942, 42 U.S.P.Q.2d 1881 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

The subject matter of the later claim need not be described literally or “*in haec verba*” in order for the specification to satisfy the description requirement. See Fujikawa v. Wattanasin, 93 F.3d 1559, 1570, 39 U.S.P.Q.2d 1895, 1904 (Fed. Cir. 1996) (“*ipsis verbis* disclosure is not necessary to satisfy the written description requirement of section 112. Instead, the disclosure need only reasonably convey to persons skilled in the art that the inventor had possession of the subject matter in question.”); In re Alton, 76 F.3d 1168, 1175, 37 U.S.P.Q.2d 1578, 1584 (Fed. Cir. 1996) (“If a person of ordinary skill in the art would have understood the inventor to have been in possession of the claimed invention at the time of filing, even if every

nuance of the claims is not explicitly described in the specification, then the adequate written description requirement is met.”)

Thus, the dispositive issue is whether Applicants’ disclosure in the patent application relied upon “reasonably conveys to the artisan that the inventor had possession at the time of the later claimed subject matter”. The threshold step in resolving this issue as set forth supra is to determine whether the Examiner has met his burden of proof by advancing acceptable reasoning inconsistent with the written description. This the Examiner has not done.

The phrase “using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code” to build a manufacturing line has been amended to add “and implementing a manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model”. Also, in the specification, on page 10, lines 3 through 5, it is recited that “[t]he method reads and manages all control model files required to model a tooling or manufacturing line by the PLC logical verification system 18.” Thus, one skilled in the art would reasonably understand that “[o]nce the part flow model is acceptable to the user 12, the method includes generating PLC code and using the PLC code to build a manufacturing line” as recited in the specification, on page 13, lines 15 through 17.

Based on the above, Applicants’ disclosure reasonably conveys to the artisan that the inventor had possession at the time of the later claimed subject matter. Contrary to the Examiner’s assertion, Applicants’ have inherently disclosed “implementing a manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model” based on the above portions of the specification. Finally, an artisan would reasonably understand from the Specification and drawings as a whole, that to build a manufacturing line, one would have to implement a manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 through 21 are allowable over the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph.

Claims 1 through 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Although Applicants disagree with the rejection, to further prosecution of the application, claims 1, 12, and 21 have been amended to clarify these claims by reciting that the step of constructing is “constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer”. Claims 1, 12, and 21 have been amended to delete the terms “acceptable” and “playing”. Claims 1, 12, and 21 have further been amended to clarify the step of “using” by adding “implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model”. As such, these claims are clear and definite. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1 through 21 are allowable over the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 through 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by “Handbook of Simulation”, edited by Jerry Banks. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

The “Handbook of Simulation”, edited by Jerry Banks, discloses principles, methodology, advances, applications, and practice. An entity represents an object that requires explicit definition. An entity can be dynamic in that it “moves” through the system, or it can be static in that it serves other entities. An entity may have attributes that pertain to that entity alone. Thus attributes should be considered local values. A resource is an entity that provides service to dynamic entities. The resource can serve one or more than one dynamic entity at the same time (i.e., operate as a parallel server). A dynamic entity can request one or more units of a resource. Verification concerns the operational model. Is it performing properly? Validation is

the determination that the conceptual model is an accurate representation of the real system. If the client has been involved throughout the study period, and the simulation analyst has followed all the steps rigorously, the likelihood of a successful implementation is increased. Banks does not disclose constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer and determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct. Banks also does not disclose using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model.

In contradistinction, independent claim 1, as amended, clarifies the invention claimed as a method of part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system. The method includes the steps of constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer and determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct. The method also includes the steps of using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model. Independent claims 12 and 21 have been amended similar to claim 1 and include other features of the present invention.

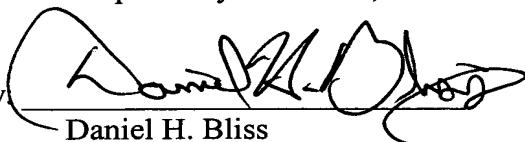
A rejection grounded on anticipation under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is proper only where the subject matter claimed is identically disclosed or described in a reference. In other words, anticipation requires the presence of a single prior art reference which discloses each and every element of the claimed invention arranged as in the claim. In re Arkley, 455 F.2d 586, 172 U.S.P.Q. 524 (C.C.P.A. 1972); Kalman v. Kimberly-Clark Corp., 713 F.2d 760, 218 U.S.P.Q. 781 (Fed. Cir. 1983); Lindemann Maschinenfabrik GMBH v. American Hoist & Derrick Co., 730 F.2d 1452, 221 U.S.P.Q. 481 (Fed. Cir. 1984).

Banks does not disclose or anticipate the claimed invention of claims 1 through 21. Specifically, Banks merely discloses a handbook of simulation in which an entity can be

dynamic in that it "moves" through the system, verification of an operational model, and validation of the conceptual model being an accurate representation of the real system. Banks lacks constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer and determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct. Banks also lacks using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model. In Banks, while Banks mentions material flow analysis of automotive assembly plants, there is no part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system. As such, Banks fails to disclose the combination of a method of part flow for a programmable logic controller logical verification system including the steps of constructing a simulation model of a part flow in a manufacturing line using a computer, determining if the part flow represented in the simulation model is correct, using the part flow simulation model to test PLC code, and implementing the manufacturing line according to the part flow simulation model as claimed by Applicants. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 through 21 are allowable over the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in a condition for allowance, which allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Daniel H. Bliss
Registration No. 32,398

BLISS McGLYNN, P.C.
2075 West Big Beaver, Suite 600
Troy, Michigan 48084
(248) 649-6090

Date: June 3, 2005

Attorney Docket No.: 0693.00242
Ford Disclosure No.: 200-0664